

MEDIA RELEASE PSA welcomes Department of Employment and Labour's decision to hire 20 000 intern inspectors: Insists that current interns must be afforded first opportunity

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) commends the Minister of Employment and Labour's initiative to employ 20 000 internship inspectors for a period of 24 months.

This massive expansion represents a significant investment in the Department and a direct response to the increasing demand for service delivery and ageing infrastructure throughout South Africa. The deployment of these intern inspectors will bolster compliance with labour legislation and create employment for young graduates. Several government buildings are not compliant with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, and the employment of these additional staff will assist in enforcing compliance to safeguard lives.

Whilst the PSA welcomes the intention to deploy additional resources, the Department must also make available sufficient tools of trade, provide proper training, and ensure a compliant working environment. To successfully integrate a cohort of this size, the Department needs a strategy that prioritises automation, standard evaluation, and a robust onboarding infrastructure. This initiative is a major milestone for the Department in strengthening the ability to protect vulnerable citizens whilst enforcing compliance in the country. This recruitment of intern inspectors will enhance operational capacity in the Department and increase output.

The PSA calls on the Minister to ensure that all qualified successful interns are permanently absorbed at the end of their contract and that current interns are afforded an opportunity to be part of this project. The PSA urges the Minister to activate transparency throughout the recruitment process and ensure that only competent candidates, based on merit, are recruited. The PSA cautions the Department to ensure that organised labour is fully involved throughout the recruitment process to monitor fairness. The PSA is committed to supporting new staff complements to ensure internal stability and proper service delivery.

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